

Advent Ritual



Mercy Place

10 December 2016

Welcome

Catherine Reuter rsm

Call to Prayer

Acknowledgement of Country and First Peoples

Power Point Presentation

Roseanne Quinn rsm

Conscious that we stand in footsteps
millennia old,
we acknowledge the traditional custodians
whose cultures and customs have nurtured,
and continue to nurture, the land and waters.

*All: We commit ourselves to walking together
in a spirit of reconciliation,
made tangible in acts of justice.*

Jonathan Hill, Aboriginal poet



Introduction

*Barbara Donohue rsm
Genevieve Caffery rsm*

Last December we gathered to continue the Advent journey and enter into the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Pope Francis, writing in *Misericordiae Vultus*, commissioned the Church *to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel*. He asked us to *dedicate living out in our daily lives the mercy which the Father constantly extends to all of us*. We were invited to acknowledge our need for mercy as well as respond to the challenge to become more merciful in our relationships with others and with the earth.

Today we affirm our experience of this Year of Mercy as we sing



Song

(Candles are gathered and placed on table)

With Your Grace

Gina Ogilvie & Monica O'Brien

God of mercy, God of grace,
Come among us fill this place.
Heal our hurting, mend our wounds.
Come among us with your grace.

Pour your love upon us now,
Touch our spirits, make us new.
See our longing, hear our prayer.
Come among us with your grace.

Bless this moment, take our hearts,
Use our hands to honour you.
With our voices we will sing,
"Come among us with your grace."



Opening Prayer

Barbara Donohue rsm

Let us pray.....

Light of Mercy,
Guide our way on this Advent journey.
May we walk *with love, compassion,
forgiveness and generosity.*
*May Your unlimited mercy continue
to transform us and our world. (MV)*

*All: May we be a sign that the Reign of God is
already present in our midst.
We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus,
the human face of Your mercy.
Amen.*

Reflection

✧ *Year of Mercy*

*Barbara Donohue rsm
Genevieve Caffery rsm*

On Sunday the 20th November, the Solemnity
of Christ the King, the Jubilee Year of Mercy closed.
Pope Francis wrote of his hope that *we will come to the
end of the year filled with gratitude and thanksgiving*



*for having been granted an extraordinary time of grace.
(MV)*

For us, this year may have offered experiences of individual and group reflection - Mercy International Reflection Process, Home Retreats, Spirituality Gatherings, Lenten Groups - as well as times of surprise, gift, conversion, challenge and renewal.

Today we have an opportunity for personal reflection and sharing of the experience of this year.

In silence, for the next 10 minutes, you may wish to express your experience through -

stillness

words

poetry

symbol

drawing

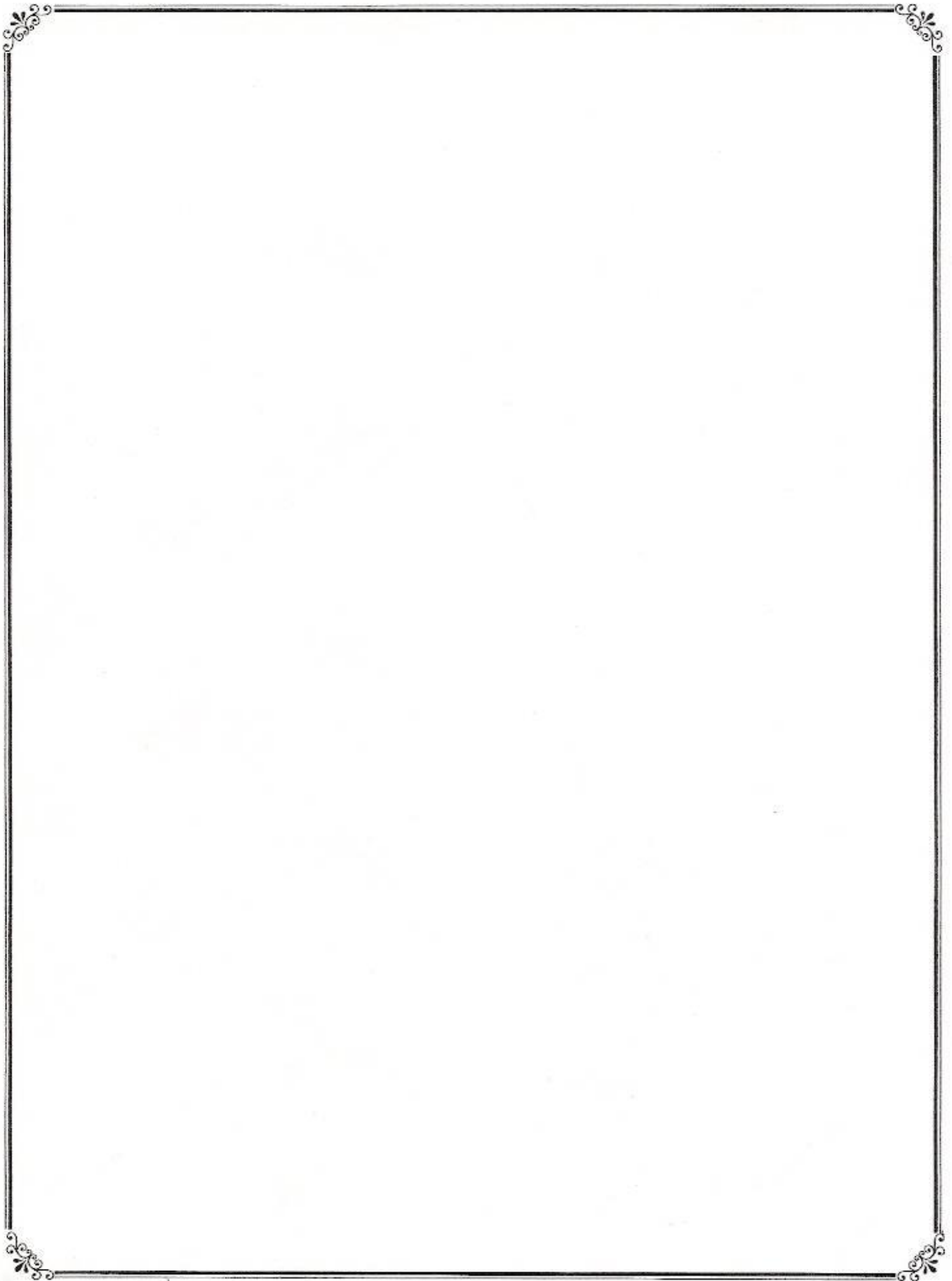
movement

.....

.....

*You are welcome to use pencils and paper on the table,
or page 7 in the booklet to record your reflections.*





✧ *Sharing*

Barbara Donohue rsm

You are invited to share your reflections with your table companions for about 10 minutes.

✧ *Response*

This morning we have entrusted to each other our reflections after having heard again the words from Pope Francis.

*All: May the gifts of this Holy Year remain with us
and be patterned in our living.*

We celebrate the mystery of God's grace as we sing



Song

Sacred Path

Trisha Watts

Refrain:

*Let the glory of God shine bright,
through eyes of compassion,
through hearts that believe.*

*Let the brilliance of God be light,
for all those who seek the dream.*

Let the glory of God shine out,
proclaiming creation, with welcoming hearts.
liberating our fears and doubts.
We walk on a sacred path.

*Let the glory of God shine bright,
through eyes of compassion,
through hearts that believe.*

*Let the brilliance of God be light,
for all those who seek the dream.*



Advent Reflection

Patricia Kirchner rsm

As we continue our sacred journey through Advent to Christmas we turn once again to words of Scripture that shape our faith.

Advent readings call us to play a vital role in God's plan, leading lives which mirror the hope and promise that this brings.

Let us enter into this listening moment, open to voices which yearn for the coming of the Saviour.

Scripture

Imelda Irving rsm

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 40:3,4

I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way –
a voice of one calling in the desert,
'Prepare the way for the Lord.
Make straight paths for him.'

Silence



Anne Frances Carroll rsm

A Reading from the Good News of Luke 7:18-23

The disciples of John the Baptist soon heard of all that Jesus was doing. When they told John about it, he sent two of his disciples to Jesus to ask him, ‘Are you really the Messiah? Or shall we keep on looking for him?’

The two disciples found Jesus while he was curing many sick people of their various diseases – healing the lame and the blind and casting out evil spirits. When they asked him John’s question, this was his reply: “Go back to John and tell him all you have seen and heard here today; how those who were blind can see. The lame are walking without a limp. The lepers are completely healed. The deaf can hear again. The dead come back to life. And the poor are hearing the good news. And tell him, ‘Blest is the one who does not lose faith in me.’”

Silence



Reflection - 'The Works of Mercy'

Patricia Kirchner rsm

The works of mercy of which Jesus speaks to the disciples of John are also proclaimed by Jesus to his followers in the Sermon on the Mount.

Across the years theologians and spiritual writers of the Christian tradition have often expressed theological principles in organized, numbered form. So too actions, attitudes and practices considered essential to living a Christian life were presented.

We know them as *The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy*.

Corporal Works of Mercy

*Feed the hungry
Give drink to the thirsty
Clothe the naked
Shelter the homeless
Visit the sick
Visit prisoners
Bury the dead*

Spiritual Works of Mercy

*Counsel the doubtful
Instruct the ignorant
Guide the sinner
Comfort the sorrowful
Forgive injuries
Bear wrongs patiently
Pray for the living and the
dead*



Chris Watt rsm

These Works of Mercy are for people who have their hearts set on making present the Reign of God. They are a way of life designed for searching people, those who want their lives to be a blessing. They invite risk in daily living, and meet the holy in the unsettling questions of the day, namely the suffering of others. Lived with conviction and sincerity, they are a sign of God forever in our midst, blessing the world.

Silence

The 8th Work of Mercy

Patricia Kirchner rsm
Genevieve Caffery rsm

On 1st September 2016, the World Day of Prayer for Creation, Pope Francis spoke of *the need to be creative in developing new and practical forms of charitable outreach as concrete expressions of the way of mercy.*

Pope Francis reiterated that the Christian life involves the practice of the traditional seven corporal and seven spiritual works of Mercy.



He added...

If we look at the works of mercy as a whole, we see that the object of mercy is human life itself and everything it embracesincluding care for our common home.

He proposed a complement of two traditional sets of seven: that the Works of mercy also include Care of Our Common Home.

Pope Francis continued...

The 8th Spiritual Work of Mercy, calls for a grateful contemplation of God's world which allows us to discover in each thing a teaching God wishes to hand to us.

The 8th Corporal Work of Mercy, requires simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness and makes itself felt in every action that seeks to build a better world.

(Ladato Si # 214,85,230-31)

Silence



✧ *Presentation of the 8th Work of Mercy*

✧ *Table Sharing*

For a few moments you are invited to share your response to Pope Francis' proclamation of the 8th Work of Mercy.

Catherine McAuley reminds us that

*The corporal and spiritual works of mercy....
so far from separating us from the love of God,
unite us much more closely to Him, and render
us more valuable in His holy service.*

(Letters, pp. 386-387)

Giftng

Our whole life then is a response to a call – the call of the Gospel to the service of Mercy. Each Advent invites us to stillness and waiting upon this call anew.



It is while waiting for the coming of the reign of God, Advent after Advent, that we come to realise that its coming depends on us. What we do will either hasten or slow, sharpen or dim our own commitment to do our part to bring it.

All: May we commit ourselves to the work of the gospel and the service of mercy, for as Catherine reminds us 'mercy is the principle path for all followers of Jesus'.

Invitation to receive gift

*(Gift is accepted by one person from each table.
Gift given to table companions.)*



Blessing

Catherine Reuter rsm

We ask for God's blessing...

*All: May God,
Source of Mercy,
Word of Mercy,
Light of Mercy
bless us as we look to the future
with hope.
Amen.*

In song, as we join in celebration, we entrust the life of all humanity, Earth, the Church, and the entire cosmos to Christ.

Song

Be Glad, O People

Gregory Norbet (Weston Priory)

I will never forget you, O my people;
On the day of anguish I will answer you.
As you join in celebration,
My joy will move among you.



*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*

You shall find a land to be your home,
Where sheep and cattle may freely roam,
Mountains from which springs
Shall flow with living waters.

*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*

I will make your faith burn brightly,
So that others may find life's fullness:
Freedom for all captives
And justice for all nations.

*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*



No longer will the circle of your life,
Its pain and goodness
Be just for yourself:
Your gift to share will flower.

*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*

As you work for others' freedom,
With a seed of hope within you,
Hunger shall not harm you,
Nor thirst withdraw your courage.

*Be glad, O people of the earth!
Lift up your heart with song and dance,
For I am with you, yes, within you, forever:
You are the heart of my heart.*



Acknowledgements

Connell, P *Catherine McAuley, Works of Mercy* 2011

Chittister, J *The Liturgical Year* 2009

Emmaus Productions 2016

Pope Francis

Ladato Si, 24 May 2015

Misericordiae Vultus, 11 April 2015

Show Mercy to Our Common Home, Message for the

Celebration of the World Day of Prayer for Creation 1 September, 2016

Watts, T and Gabrielle Lord, *Sanctuary* 2005

